

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6987

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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FOR IOP/M

FOR IBS/PA, PASS IPS

STATE FOR AF/E AND AF/S

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION

ZAMBIA'S TWO NATIONAL DAILIES, THE TIMES OF ZAMBIA AND THE ZAMBIA DAILY MAIL, TODAY COME OUT IN STRONG SUPPORT OF THE APPARENT POSITION NOW TAKEN BY BOTH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT KAUNDA THAT POWER IN RHODESIA BE DIRECTLY HANDED OVER TO THE FRONT WHICH WILL DECIDE IF AND WHEN AN ELECTION SHOULD BE HELD.

IN STRIKINGLY SIMILAR EDITORIALS, THE TWO NEWSPAPERS ASSERT THAT THIS IS VITAL IF A CIVIL WAR IS TO BE AVOIDED IN AN
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INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE.

THE ZAMBIA DAILY MAIL CONTENTS THAT THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM IS NOW MOVING INTO A "DECISIVE PHASE" AND CALLS ON ALL WHO ARE WORKING FOR "A LASTING PEACEFUL SOLUTION" TO GIVE "UNQUALIFIED SUPPORT" TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.

WHILE TERMING THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS "AN HONEST ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM WITHOUT FURTHER BLOODSHED" THE MAIL STATES THAT NEITHER THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS NOR THEIR SPONSORS HAVE CONCRETE PLANS TO UNSEAT SMITH.

ACCORDING TO THE MAIL THIS IS THE REASON THE BRITISH AND THE AMERICANS NOW FIND THEMSELVES "IN A WEAK POSITION."

THE MAIL SAYS THE PROPOSALS "FAIL TO INTIMIDATE SMITH INTO SURRENDER AND ALLOW HIM TO CONTINUE HIS DEFIANCE," CITING SMITH REFUSAL TO GO TO THE PROPOSED MALTA MEETING AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THIS DEFIANCE. BUT, CONTINUES THE MAIL, THE FAILURE TO UNSEAT SMITH UNDER THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS INCREASES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, A FACT RECOGNIZED IN THE PROPOSALS BY THE RECOMMENDATION THAT THE FUTURE ZIMBABWE ARMY "BE BUILT AROUND THE EXISTING ARMY OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT."

THE MAIL SAYS IT IS CORRECT TO BUILD INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE'S MILITARY POWER AROUND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND SAYS THE SAME SHOULD BE DONE WITH POLITICAL POWER.

"BUT WHEN THAT POLITICAL POWER MEANS GETTING IT BY GOING TO THE POLLS BEFORE INDEPENDENCE, THEN THAT IS PROVIDING A DANGEROUS RECIPE FOR RHODESIA."

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BLACKS AND WHITES, SAYS THE MAIL, HAVE BEEN FIGHTING EVER SINCE THE WHITE MAN ENTERED RHODESIA, NDEBELE AND SHONA WERE "AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS" UNTIL THE COMING OF THE WHITE MAN, AND THE SHONA THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN DIVIDED ALONG SMALL TRIBAL GROUPINGS. "EXPECTING THESE VARIOUS TRIBAL GROUPINGS TO SUDDENLY LOVE ONE ANOTHER IN THE SWELTERING ATMOSPHERE OF AN ELECTION IS EXPECTING TOO MUCH."

PEOPLE WITH A GENUINE INTEREST IN RHODESIA'S WELFARE "SHOULD WORK HARD TO BRING THEIR LEADERS TOGETHER SO THAT THEY CAN GO INTO INDEPENDENCE AS ONE PEOPLE."

SAYS THE MAIL: "THE EFFORTS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THEIR GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE TOWARDS BRINGING BLACK LEADERS TOGETHER TO FORM ONE GOVERNMENT."

A RHODESIA, TORN BY CIVIL WARS, WILL NOT BE THE TYPE OF RHODESIA WHICH BOTH THE BRITISH AND THE AMERICANS WILL WANT TO SEE EMERGE."

THE MAIL CLOSES BY STATING THAT LASTING PEACE CAN ONLY BE

ACHIEVED THROUGH "A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY ..."
WHICH MUST COME FROM PRESSURE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.

TODAY'S OPINION IN THE PARTY-OWNED TIMES OF ZAMBIA SAYS THERE
ARE TWO HARD FACTS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF RHODESIA, THAT SMITH
MUST GO, AND THAT THE INCOMING GOVERNMENT MUST BE ABLE TO
MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER AND AVOID CIVIL WAR.

"REMOVING SMITH RESTS SQUARELY AND FAIRLY ON THE BRITISH," SAYS
THE TIMES, "WHILE ONLY THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAS THE MILITARY AND
POLITICAL POWER TO HEAD OFF CHAOS AFTER SMITH HAS BEEN REMOVED."

THE TIMES CONTINUES: "IN AN IDEAL SITUATION WE WOULD AGREE THAT
INDEPENDENCE SHOULD COME AFTER FREE ELECTIONS. BUT RHODESIA IS
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NOT IN AN IDEAL SITUATION. THERE IS DEEPROOTED BITTERNESS THERE."

THE PROBLEM IN RHODESIA, ACCORDING TO THE TIMES, IS THE RESULT OF "HUMILIATIONS AND CRUELITIES OF THE WHITE SETTLERS" AND THE "HARSH, UNYIELDING TRIBALISM" OF AFRICAN POLITICS IN RHODESIA OVER THE PAST TWENTY YEARS.

THE TIMES CONTENTS THAT RACIALISM AND TRIBALISM WILL NOT DISAPPEAR WITH INDEPENDENCE AND THAT ELECTIONS "WILL NOT MAKE THOSE CAUSES OF STRIFE DISAPPEAR."

CONTINUES THE TIMES: "BY FAILING TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT BOTH THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL POWER OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS PROVIDE NO BASIS FOR AN ORDERLY TRANSFER OF POWER IN RHODESIA."

THE TIMES BELIEVES THAT NO SOLUTION THAT LEAVES OUT THE FIGHTING CADRES AND THE POLITICAL LEADERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT CAN
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WOSK AND ADDS THAT ANY INCOMING GOVERNMENT MUST BE STRONG ENOUGH TO RULE AND MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER AND "THAT GOVERNMENT HAS TO BE BASED ON THE PATRIOTIC FRONT."

BRITAIN AND AMERICA, ACCORDING TO THE EDITORIAL, "MUST THROW AWAY PRECONCEIVED AND IRRELEVANT INTERPRETATIONS OF DEMOCRACY... AND LOOK AT THE SITUATION AS IT REALLY IS."

THE TIMES CLOSES BY CONTENDING THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT FORCES "BROUGHT ABOUT THE NOW DISCREDITED ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS."

SAYS THE TIMES: "ONLY A POLITICAL IDIOT COULD SUGGEST THAT THOSE FIGHTERS BE ASKED TO CEASEFIRE AND THEN SURRENDER POLITICAL POWER. THEY CANNOT BE SPLIT FROM THEIR POLITICAL LEADERS. THOSE LEADERS ARE IN THE PATRIOTIC FRONT."
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